



Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
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Anna M. McCabe School

SMITHFIELD

THE SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

January 16, 2004



School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT)

The school accountability program of the Rhode Island Department of Education

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Purpose and Limits of This Report

This is the report of the SALT team that visited Anna M. McCabe School from January 12 through January 16, 2004.

The SALT visit report makes every effort to provide your school with a valid, specific picture of how well your students are learning. The report also portrays how the teaching in your school affects learning and how the school supports learning and teaching. The purpose of developing this information is to help you make changes in teaching and the school that will improve the learning of your students. The report is valid because the team's inquiry is governed by a protocol that is carefully designed to make it possible for visit team members to make careful judgments using accurate evidence. The careful exercise of professional judgment makes the findings useful for school improvement because these judgments identify where the visit team thinks the school is doing well and where it is doing less well.

The major questions the team addressed were:

How well do students learn at Anna M. McCabe School?

How well does the teaching at Anna M. McCabe School affect learning?

How well does Anna M. McCabe School support learning and teaching?

The following features of this visit are at the heart of the report:

Members of the visit team are primarily teachers and administrators from Rhode Island public schools. The majority of team members are teachers. The names and affiliations of the team members are listed at the end of the report.

The team sought to capture what makes this school work, or not work, as a public institution of learning. Each school is unique and the team has tried to capture what makes Anna M. McCabe School distinct.

The team did not compare this school to any other school.

When writing the report, the team deliberately chose words that it thought would best convey its message to the school, based on careful consideration of what it had learned about the school.

The team reached consensus on each conclusion, each recommendation, and each commendation in this report.

The team made its judgment explicit.

This report reflects only the week in the life of the school that was observed and considered by this team. The report is not based on what the school plans to do in the future or on what it has done in the past.

This school visit is supported by the Rhode Island Department of Education as a component of School Accountability for Learning and Teaching (SALT). To gain the full advantages of a peer visiting system, RIDE deliberately did not participate in the active editing of this SALT visit report. That was carried out by the team's Chair with the support of Catalpa. Ltd.

The team closely followed a rigorous protocol of inquiry that is rooted in Practice-based Inquiry™ (Catalpa Ltd). The detailed *Handbook for Chairs of the SALT School Visit* describes the theoretical constructs behind the SALT visit and stipulates the many details of the visit procedures. Contact Rick Richards at (401) 222-4600 x 2194 or ride0782@ride.ri.net for further information about the *Handbook* or other SALT protocols. The *Handbook* and other relevant documents are also available at www.Catalpa.org.

SALT visits undergo rigorous quality control. Catalpa Ltd. monitors each visit and determines whether the report can be endorsed. Endorsement assures the reader that the team and the school followed the visit protocol. It also assures that the conclusions and the report meet specified standards.

Sources of Evidence

The Sources of Evidence that this team used to support its conclusions are listed in the appendix.

The team spent a total of over 120 hours in direct classroom observation. Most of this time was spent in observing complete lessons or classes. Almost every classroom was visited at least once, and almost every teacher was observed more than once.

The full visit team built the conclusions, commendations, and recommendations presented here through intense and thorough discussion. The team met for a total of 28 hours in team meetings spanning the five days of the visit. This time does not include the time the team spent in classrooms, with teachers, and in meetings with students, parents, and school and district administrators.

The team did agree by consensus that every conclusion in this report is:

Important enough to include in the report

Supported by the evidence the team gathered during the visit

Set in the present, and

Contains the judgment of the team

Using the Report

This report is designed to have value to all audiences concerned with how Anna M. McCabe School can improve student learning. However, the most important audience is the school itself.

How your school improvement team reads and considers the report is the critical first step. RIDE will provide a SALT Fellow to lead a follow-up session with the school improvement team to help start the process. With support from the Smithfield School Improvement Coordinator and from SALT fellows, the school improvement team should carefully decide what changes it wants to make in learning, teaching, and the school, and amend its School Improvement Plan to reflect these decisions.

The Smithfield district, RIDE and the public should consider what the report says or implies about how they can best support Anna M. McCabe School as it works to strengthen its performance.

Any reader of this report should consider the report as a whole. A reader who only looks at recommendations misses important information.

2. PROFILE OF ANNA M. MCCABE SCHOOL

Anna M. McCabe Elementary School is located in Smithfield, Rhode Island. As one of four Smithfield elementary schools, McCabe services 342 students in pre-kindergarten through grade five with an attendance rate of 96 percent. The pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes meet in two half-day sessions.

Anna M. McCabe School was officially opened in October 1957, as the Pleasant View Elementary School. In 1961, the school was renamed in honor of Miss Anna M. McCabe who had taught in the Smithfield schools for 46 years. A one-story building, McCabe consisted of 12 classrooms and a cafeteria, which also serves as an auditorium. In 1964, six classrooms, two special education classrooms, and a library were added. Each classroom is equipped with one computer workstation with Internet access. The library media center has eight workstations online, and the Follett automation system is in place.

A professional staff of one full-time principal, 34 full- and part-time faculty, five paraprofessionals, four cafeteria workers and two custodians services McCabe School. The student population is 97.8 percent white, 1.4 percent Asian, and 0.8 percent black. Twenty-three students qualify (7%) for free or reduced price lunches. Seventy-one students (20%) receive special education services which include resource, occupational and physical therapy and speech and adaptive physical education.

A student council, which comprises nine students in the fourth and fifth grades, leads morning exercises for the school. These students plan activities, including Celebration of Learning meetings with the principal. They distribute fliers with a weekly theme of good citizenship. Each day they provide "Words of Wisdom" for the students.

The McCabe Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) supports many education programs for both the students and the faculty. They sponsor field trips and classroom speaker programs, and they train volunteers to work in classrooms and to assist with projects in special areas. The PTO maintains the playgrounds and gardens with funds obtained through its fundraisers. An after school program, Extended After-School Enrichment (EASE), sponsored by the PTO, affords students opportunities to explore many different subjects.

The staff at Anna M. McCabe School actively seeks and receives grants for many and varied activities including robotics, gardens, computers and artists-in-residence.

Anna M. McCabe School received the Rhode Island Board of Regents Recognition as a Commended School for Exceptional Improvement in English Language Arts and Mathematics for its performance in 2002.

3. PORTRAIT OF ANNA M. MCCABE SCHOOL AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT

Anna M. McCabe School works diligently to assure that its students succeed in school and in life. The entire staff radiates warmth and caring, models important social skills, and finds ways to encourage students and to celebrate their successes. Students are thoughtful, respectful and eager to learn.

Opening exercises, conducted by members of the student council, welcome the students each morning. The student council also plans a monthly town meeting, open to the community, where student work is celebrated.

Both teachers and students work hard here to maintain McCabe's status as a high-performing school. Learning comes first, and expectations are generally high. Teachers hone their skills through regular professional development. The principal supports her staff and works hard to obtain what they want. Students learn to analyze problems, explore options, and find solutions. They communicate effectively and learn that their success is achieved through hard work, collaboration, and perseverance. Parents see the school secretary as their friend.

The district encourages teachers to attend workshops, responds to professional development requests, and plans district-wide opportunities for teachers. Teachers apply the new skills they learn in their daily practice. Grade level teachers take advantage of common planning time to plan together. Cross grade articulation of their instruction methods is less common. Teachers do work together to determine entrance and exit expectations for students at each grade level.

The school is housed in a 1950s building that struggles to meet the needs of students in the 21st Century. Storage throughout the building is inadequate. The cafeteria also serves as a gymnasium, which makes efficient scheduling difficult.

Anna M. McCabe School values and celebrates learning, respect and consideration for others. Students thrive here.

4. FINDINGS ON STUDENT LEARNING

Conclusions

Students at Anna M. McCabe School are enthusiastic writers. They enjoy opportunities to write across the curriculum, and they do it well. They use rubrics effectively to focus their thinking, plan their writing, and evaluate their work. They demonstrate an awareness of conventions by correcting their own work, often without reminders. They use word walls and dictionaries to check their spelling of high frequency words. Students say the purpose of their using conventions appropriately is to make their ideas clear to the reader. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, meeting with students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

Students demonstrate excellent problem solving skills in all academic areas. They work well with other students to find solutions to complex problems and tasks. They say they enjoy the challenge of explaining and developing their thinking and finding evidence to justify their answers to their peers. They use their prior knowledge and schema effectively to support their arguments. Students also work well independently to solve problems successfully. They have ready access to classroom resources and materials, and they use them appropriately. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, reviewing completed and ongoing student work)*

Students say they especially enjoy math, science, learning games, and projects. They feel that the hands-on approach used in most classrooms helps them learn and understand. They effectively use a wide variety of strategies—both simple and sophisticated—to complete these activities. They understand that there are different ways to solve the same problem, and they learn by sharing their ideas with one other. Even during indoor recess, students choose to use their time to continue learning by using classroom materials and games. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, meeting with students)*

Students are fluent readers who make connections to their lives, their studies, and to other books they have read. Their responses to reading texts and tasks are not as thorough and comprehensive as they are in the other subject areas. They are often satisfied with merely adequate responses to reading prompts and questions. However, they apply their reading skills well in other content areas with high interest, such as social studies, math, and science. They are comfortable moving independently about their classrooms to use books, resource materials and computers to locate information. Students also enjoy being actively involved in word work and vocabulary development. They recognize that these skills are tools that will enhance their reading. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students)*

Students respect their teachers and their peers. They feel part of a community. They enjoy the opportunity to participate in the monthly McCabe Town Meetings where they celebrate learning and demonstrate school spirit in an assembly planned and conducted by the student council. Students are comfortable asking clarifying questions sometimes even challenging the teacher respectfully. They value learning and recognize its importance in their lives and talk about that. Students help one another without prompting. They live the school motto: “Respect yourself, respect others, and respect your school.” *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, meeting with students)*

Important Thematic Findings in Student Learning

Students:

- ◆ *Use problem-solving skills effectively in all academic areas.*
- ◆ *Respect learning.*
- ◆ *Take responsibility for their work and their learning.*

5. FINDINGS ON TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Conclusions

Teachers have built a learning community here at Anna M. McCabe School. Their goal is to foster respect, independent thinking, and problem solving. There is little wasted conversation between and among adults and students. Interactions with students are frequent, respectful, and purposeful. Teachers use and expect appropriate vocabulary and language in their classrooms. In most areas they use deliberate questioning to elicit higher-level thinking. Students work regularly with partners or in groups. They are encouraged to ask one another for help before asking the teacher. They are taught to listen carefully to one another to understand different viewpoints and to justify their own. Established routines make transitions smooth and predictable, eliminating interruptions and maximizing instruction time. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators)*

Teachers identify the improvement of student writing as a major focus for the year and are exploring several different programs and approaches to instruction. They encourage writing in all areas. Teachers say they “hook” students on writing by using their interests as motivators for writing assignments. This is especially evident in science and math writing. Teachers model writing in the classroom and identify figurative language in literature. They assign writing for many purposes and audiences and require that students follow a process that includes drafting, revising, and editing. This often leads to a published piece that is shared within the class, with other classes, on the walls, or at the McCabe Town Meeting. Teachers regularly emphasize that it is important for students to use correct spelling and proper conventions in order to make their ideas clear to the reader. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing school improvement plan, 2003 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results)*

Teachers at Anna M. McCabe School work cooperatively to develop school-wide rubrics for general use. Many teachers also develop task-specific rubrics. Expectations for performance tasks and projects are clearly explained to students with rubrics and criteria. Examples of student work that meet the standard are shared with students to serve as models. As a result, most students complete their tasks correctly and rarely complain that they do not understand what to do. Teachers score student work directly on the rubric and often include helpful commentary. They send these rubrics home with student work, and parents say they understand and approve of this method of assessment. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, talking with students and teachers, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments)*

Teachers effectively use the *Investigations* mathematics program to engage children's interest in mathematics. All teachers were trained when the district adopted the program four years ago, but the newer teachers have not had professional development in *Investigations*. All teachers agree that more professional development for all math teachers would make the use of this program even more effective. A few teachers express mixed feelings about this program because they feel it is necessary to supplement it with worksheets and drill. This confuses students. In addition to *Investigations*, teachers in all classrooms emphasize problem-solving strategies and the proper use of the language of mathematics. They respect the thoughtful contributions of students, encourage many different solutions to the same problem, ask probing questions to help students develop their ideas, and emphasize the importance of clarity in both written and oral explanations. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing school improvement plan, classroom textbooks, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

The use of resource teachers, the reading specialist, speech and language pathologists, therapists, and paraprofessionals within the classroom is almost seamless here. These specialists see their purpose as making all children successful both in social situations and in the regular classroom settings. They co-teach and plan with the regular education teachers and make appropriate accommodations and modifications usually within a regular classroom setting. Very few students are removed from their classrooms for instruction. Children with special needs are successfully included here. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, discussing student work with teachers)*

Teachers at Anna M. McCabe School say that teaching reading is their strength. Teachers have the freedom to implement the language arts curriculum by choosing their own instruction methods and materials. In the lower grades teachers use the basal reader as the primary source of reading instruction. Most often these students are reading the same book at the same time and responding to workbook questions. In the upper grade levels, teachers use trade books as the primary source of reading instruction. Instruction and discussion in reading lessons is usually teacher-directed, and students are surprisingly passive. Students respond to reading through teacher created prompts in small reading groups, on worksheets, or in reading journals. Teachers ask high-level questions, but they often don't probe for deeper analysis and interpretation. In other subject areas teachers expect more rigorous, comprehensive answers from students. All teachers emphasize vocabulary in context. Word work is a regular instruction component in many classrooms. Classroom teachers do not regularly assess with running records or other diagnostic tools to drive their instruction. Individual reading conferences on self-selected readings between the teacher and a student are not standard practice in all classrooms. Teachers do not have access to sufficient leveled books to use groups effectively to meet the needs of all readers. Reading instruction methods are not sufficiently rigorous to allow all students to reach their highest potential. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries, reviewing district and school policies and practices, Position paper on literacy draft #1 October 30, 2003)*

Teachers, with district support, are purchasing non-fiction books to supplement their content area programs. They successfully use these texts as resources to integrate reading into social studies and science. *(following students, observing classes meeting with the school improvement team, students, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, and school and district administrators)*

Teachers find many motivating ways to practice, reinforce, and extend skills and concepts. Games and projects are an integral part of instruction at Anna M. McCabe School. Teachers make instruction materials available for students throughout the school day—even during recess—and students use them purposefully and appropriately. Students take advantage of these opportunities and are usually actively engaged and self-motivated in learning tasks even during their free time. *(following students, observing classes, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators)*

Commendations for Anna M. McCabe School

Respect and personal responsibility

Inclusion of students with special needs

Co-teaching and collaboration between and among regular education teachers, resource teachers, the reading teacher, therapists, and paraprofessionals

Use of time

Problem solving

Use of appropriate vocabulary

Hands-on activity-based learning

Active listening

Recommendations for Anna M. McCabe School

Develop consistent language and procedures for teaching writing across the grade levels.

Hold students to the same high expectations in reading that you have in other areas.

Move beyond the *Problem Solver* to expand problem-solving opportunities for students.

Recommendations for Smithfield School District

Provide ongoing professional development in *Investigations* for both new and veteran teachers.

6. FINDINGS ON SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

Conclusions

The administration, the entire school staff, and the parents support and contribute to the learning community here at Anna M. McCabe School. Learning is respected and celebrated by adults and students. Good behavior is expected. An emphasis on respect permeates the atmosphere. Teachers work well collegially and seek out opportunities to grow professionally. They willingly share their expertise with one another. Students demonstrate pride in their well-maintained school and take good care of school property. Students say they are safe and secure here. Parents are actively involved in the school. They attend the McCabe Town Meeting, conferences, report nights, shows and assemblies. In addition, they support teachers, the cultural arts program, and the after school enrichment program. Many volunteer in the school and support their children's learning at home. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, 2003 SALT Survey report, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

Both students and parents say they understand the use of rubrics for assessment. They feel rubrics clearly indicate how well students are doing and what they need to do to improve. The current report cards are not consistent with current instruction and assessment practices and do not adequately communicate student progress. *(meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, reviewing completed and ongoing student work, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing classroom assessments, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

The school building is not adequate to meet the needs of the current population. The cafeteria—with tile over concrete flooring, low ceilings with fans, and folding tables—also serves as the gymnasium and auditorium. The structural limitations of this room present difficulties for physical education classes. Its irregular availability limits opportunities to schedule physical education classes here. Teachers and parents express concern about the lack of screens in the school windows. They worry about children who are allergic to bees. Storage space is limited throughout the school. In spite of these limitations, the staff copes well with these physical challenges. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators)*

The use of the library as a classroom, meeting room, and temporary gym makes it difficult to create a true media center. Although computers are housed in this room, they are not always available to students. Books are not attractively displayed, and many are outdated. Parents say their children are reading from the very same books they read when they went to school here. *(following students, observing classes, observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators)*

In addition to individual planning time, grade level teachers use their weekly contractual common planning time to share their grade level expectations, work, and planning. Special education teachers participate at least weekly with grade level teachers at common planning time. This results in very effective team teaching in many classrooms. Teachers say they value this time and use it to improve their instruction. Teachers keep records of their planning meetings and submit them to the principal who sometimes attends these meetings. *(following students, observing classes, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, reviewing district and school policies and practices, reviewing records of professional development activities)*

Teachers applaud the strong district and school support for inclusion practices. They say that the addition of a third resource teacher allows them to implement their beliefs about inclusion. The principal encourages resource teachers to work closely with the reading teacher to ensure consistency. *(meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, discussing student work with teachers, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

A high percentage of Anna M. McCabe School faculty participates on the school improvement team. Although parents currently are not members, they have opportunities to discuss school improvement issues at a Parent/Principal Advisory Committee. The school improvement plan is ambitious, but it does not have indicators of accomplishment which document effects on student learning or indicate specific time lines for implementation. *(observing the school outside of the classroom, meeting with the school improvement team, students, parents, school and district administrators, talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators, reviewing school improvement plan, reviewing district strategic plan, reviewing district and school policies and practices)*

Commendations for Anna M. McCabe School

Parent support for the school

Commitment of teachers

Respectful atmosphere

District and school support for inclusion practices and common planning time.

Recommendations for Anna M. McCabe School

Update and expand the library collection of books and audio-visual materials.

Involve parents and community members on the school improvement team.

Develop action plans and indicators of accomplishment that focus on improvement in student learning with specific time lines.

Enlist parent volunteers to assist in the library.

Recommendations for Smithfield School District

Align report cards with your standards-based curriculum.

Provide adequate space for the demands of education in the 21st Century.

7. FINAL ADVICE TO ANNA M. MCCABE SCHOOL

Anna M. McCabe is a school with big ideas. The entire staff models a “can do” attitude for the students. This SALT Team feels you do a wonderful job motivating and inspiring your students. We challenge you to raise the bar and move your students beyond the standards to even higher performance levels.

Build your school and classroom libraries to showcase reading. Give students more opportunities to choose and share good literature in the classroom. Develop student skills so that they can conduct literature discussions independently, actively listening to one another and exploring the text and their ideas in depth.

Continue to work collegially and you and your students will continue to thrive.

ENDORSEMENT OF SALT VISIT TEAM REPORT

Anna M. McCabe School

January 16, 2004

Catalpa Ltd. monitors all SALT visits and examines each SALT visit team report to determine whether it should be endorsed as a legitimate SALT report. The endorsement decision is based on procedures and criteria specified in *Endorsing SALT Visit Team Reports*. (available on Catalpa website). Catalpa Ltd. bases its judgment about the legitimacy of a report on these three questions:

Did the SALT visit team and the host school conduct the visit in a manner that is reasonably consistent with the protocol for the visit?

Do the conclusions of the report meet the tests for conclusions specified in the visit protocol (important, accurate, set in present, shows the team's judgment)?

Does the report meet the tests for a report as specified in the visit protocol (fair, useful, and persuasive of productive action)?

Using the answers to these questions, the final decision to endorse the report answers the overall endorsement question: Is this a legitimate SALT team visit report? In order to make this determination, Catalpa weighs all the questions and issues that have been raised to decide whether a report is legitimate or not. While it is possible that a challenge related to one of the three questions listed above would be serious enough to withhold or condition the endorsement, it is more likely that issues serious enough to challenge a report's legitimacy will cut across the three questions.

While the SALT visit protocol requires that all SALT visits are conducted to an exceptionally high standard of rigor, visits are "real-life" events; it is impossible to control for all unexpected circumstances that might arise. The protocol for the conduct of the visit is spelled out in the *Handbook for SALT Visit Chairs*, 1st edition.

Since unexpected circumstances might result in either the team or the school straying too far from the protocol for a visit, Catalpa monitors both the school and the team during a visit regarding the conduct of the visit.

Most often actual visit events or issues do not challenge a report's legitimacy and Catalpa's monitoring and endorsement is routine. A district administrator, principal, faculty member or parent may not like a report, or think it is too negative, or think the visit should have been conducted in a manner that is not consistent with the protocol. None of these represent a challenge to a report's legitimacy; concerns that might challenge an endorsement are based on events that stray too far from the protocol.

The Catalpa review of this visit and this report was routine.

The steps Catalpa completed for this review were:

- discussion with the chair about any issues related to the visit before it began
- daily discussion of any issues with the visit chair during the visit
- discussion with the principal regarding any concerns about the visit at the time of the visit
- thorough review of the report in both its pre-release and final version form

The findings from the review are:

1. This team was certified to meet team membership requirements by RIDE staff.
2. This report was produced by a legitimate SALT Visit that was led by a trained SALT Visit Chair and conducted in a manner that is consistent with SALT Visit procedures.
3. The conclusions are legitimate SALT visit conclusions.
4. The report is a legitimate SALT visit report.

Accordingly, Catalpa Ltd. endorses this report.



CATALPA LTD.

Thomas A. Wilson, EdD

Catalpa Ltd.

February 4, 2004

REPORT APPENDIX

Sources of Evidence for This Report

In order to write this report the team examined test scores, student work, and other documents related to this school. The school improvement plan for Anna M. McCabe School was the touchstone document for the team. No matter how informative documents may be, however, there is no substitute for being at the school while it is in session—in the classrooms, in the lunchroom, and in the hallways. The team built its conclusions primarily from information about what the students, staff, and administrators think and do during their day. Thus, this visit allowed the team to build informed judgments about the teaching, learning, and support that actually takes place at Anna M. McCabe School. The visit team collected its evidence from the following sources of evidence:

- ◆ *observing classes*
- ◆ *observing the school outside of the classroom*
- ◆ *following 7 students for a full day*
- ◆ *observing the work of teachers and staff for a full day*
- ◆ *meeting at scheduled times with the following groups:*
 - teachers*
 - school improvement team*
 - school and district administrators*
 - students*
 - parents*
- ◆ *talking with students, teachers, staff, and school administrators*
- ◆ *reviewing completed and ongoing student work*
- ◆ *discussing student work with teachers*
- ◆ *analyzing state assessment results as reported in Information Works!*
- ◆ *reviewing the following documents:*
 - district and school policies and practices*
 - records of professional development activities*
 - classroom assessments*
 - school improvement plan for Anna M. McCabe School*
 - position paper on literacy draft #1 October 30, 2003*
 - district strategic plan*
 - 2003 SALT Survey report*
 - classroom textbooks*
 - 2003 Information Works!*
 - 2003 New Standards Reference Examination School Summaries*
 - 2003 Rhode Island Writing Assessment results*
 - School and District Report Card*

State Assessment Results for Anna M. McCabe School

Assessment results create pieces of evidence that the visit team uses as it conducts its inquiry. The team uses this evidence to shape its efforts to locate critical issues for the school. It also uses this evidence, along with other evidence, to draw conclusions about those issues.

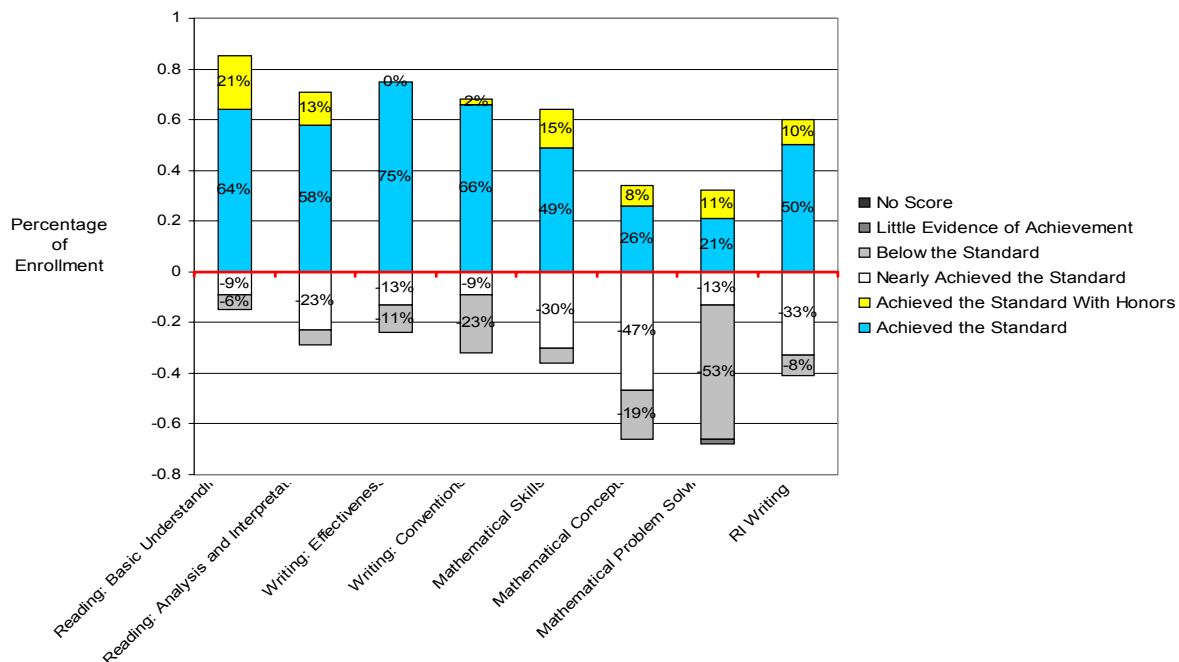
This school's results are from the latest available state assessment information. It is presented here in four different ways:

- ◆ *against performance standards;*
- ◆ *compared to similar students in the state;*
- ◆ *across student groups within the school;*
- ◆ *and over time.*

RESULTS IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The first display shows how well the students do in relation to standards in English/Language Arts and mathematics. Student results are shown as the percentage of students taking the test whose score places them in the various categories at, above, or below the performance standard. Endorsed by the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education in 1998, the tested standards can be found in the publication *New Standards Performance Standards*.

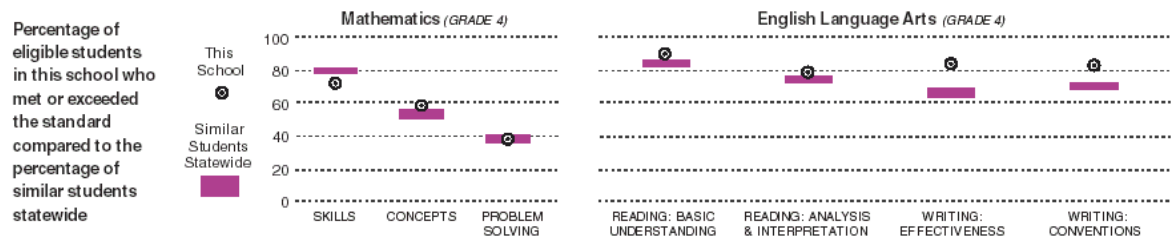
Table1. 2002-03 Student Results on Rhode Island State Assessments



RESULTS COMPARED TO SIMILAR STUDENTS IN THE STATE

This chart includes the performance levels of students with special education needs, students participating in ESL or bilingual programs, low socio-economic status (a composite of income level, racial background and parental education), as well as the performance of students with none of these characteristics. Taking all these characteristics into account, the graph displays the overall performance of students in this school compared to - a group of students from across the state whose characteristics match this school's students.

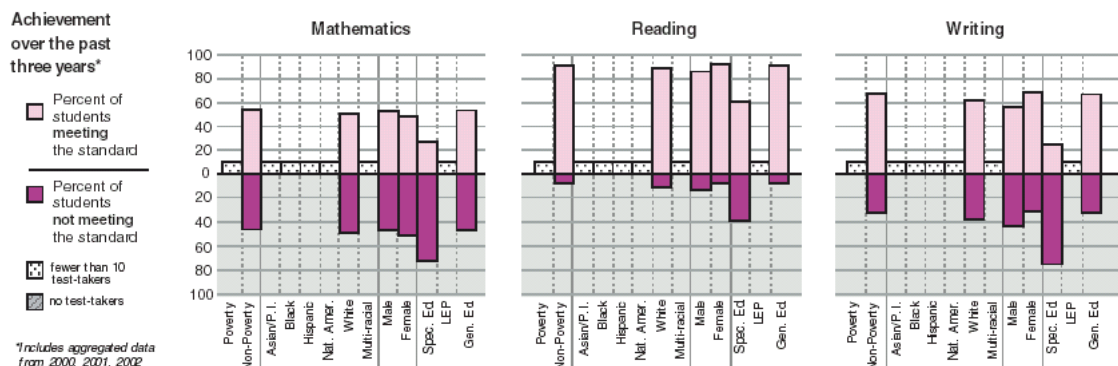
Table 2. 2001-2002 Student Results in Comparison to Similar Students Statewide



RESULTS ACROSS STUDENT GROUPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

An important way to display student results is across different groups of students with different characteristics who are in the school. This display creates information about how well the school meets the learning needs of its various students. Since breaking students into these smaller groups can result in groups becoming too small to show accurate results, this display shows the results based on three years of testing. The Department defines an important gap between different groups (an equity gap) to be a gap of 15% or more.

Table 3. 2001-2002 Student Results across Subgroup



SCHOOL REPORT CARD

The Anna M. McCabe School has been categorized as high performing sustaining on the basis of its assessment results from 2000 to 2003. The following is the school report card that shows the school's performance in relation to the 2004 annual measurable objectives (AMO).

Information Works! data for Anna M. McCabe School is available at <http://www.ridoe.net>.

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